THE TRUTH AND EXCELLENCY OF Chriſtian Religion DEMONSTRATED AGAINST

Jews,
Mahometans,
and
Heathens.

PUBLISH'D

At the deſire of ſome Learned men, and for the ſatisfaction of all Rational Perſons in *ENGLAND.*

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THE Advertiſement.

THis ſmall Tract, is extant in Latin, under the Title of Brevis Demonſtratio Religionis Chriſtianæ veritatis, *and ſubjoyn'd to* Brenius *his* Notes, *on the Old and New Teſtaments. The Author's Name, is not there ſo much as intimated, neither has it yet, in any degree of certainty, arrived at theſe parts. The Tranſlation of it, was at firſt undertaken, with a ſingle aim, at the Advantage of* Engliſh-

Readers, and is now ſet out, not without the Encouragement and Recommendation of ſuch, as may be judged, to underſtand well, the concerns of Chriſtian Religion, *and the neceſſities of the Profeſſors of it. Whether or no, this Conciſe Piece, conſider'd in its ſtrength of Arguments, Perſpicuity of Stile, Evidence of Reaſon, Exactneſs of Method, and Comprehenſiveneſs of Matter, does, in a little compaſs, plead its own Cauſe, and implead oppoſite pretences, more effectually and to better purpoſes, than ſome of the ſame complexion with it-ſelf, have done, is freely left, to the Cenſure and dijudication of thoſe that have read them, and ſhall charge their judgements to a concurrence, in the peruſal of this. To make this Tranſlation correſpondent, in*

every

every point, with the Original, the ſubſequent Paſſages and words, ought to be inſerted, according to theſe Reference;

Page 3. *line* 28: * in external and ſuperſtitious rites, neither

P. 7. *l.* 32. * and did ſcarcely contain the firſt lineaments of perfect virtue, ſo that even in heathen Philoſophers, are found more perfect Precepts, concerning ſome virtues ('ſpecially thoſe that belong to the contempt of worldly things, Temperance, and Patience) than in *Moſes*: whence alſo we read, that ſome holy men of that Religion, led lives more excellent than thoſe Precepts; *Moſes* pray's for his Enemies, *Exod.* xxxii. *Numb.* xi. and elſe-where often; which yet was not commanded in his law. *David* alſo, is an Example of greater Meekneſs than was preſcribed in the law, ii. *Sam.* xvi. and xvii.

Pag. {15. 18.} *l.* {21. 26.} Divine man.

The unfaithfulneſs and confidence of the Printer, have occaſioned theſe

ERRATA.

PAge 2, line 18. read *Comparatively*, l. ult. *Alcoran*. p. 3. l 22. *a bleſſed*, l. 23. *an heavenly*. p. 4. l. 22. *accommodated*. l. 30 *of ſo great*. p. 5. l. 20. for But r. *Now*. l. 25. f. ſeriouſly r. *ſervilely*. p. 6. l. 18. f. induced r. *embraced*. p. 7. l. 12. *Abyſſines*, l. 13. *Spain*; p. 8. l. 14. f. as r. *or*. l. 22. (2.) p. 9. l. 9 dele *if*. l. 14. (3.) p. 10. l. 13. *Babyloniſh*. p. 11. l. 10. *intrinſecal*. l. 20. f. moderate r. *modern*. p. 12. l. 25. *Alcoran*. p. 14. l. 5. *accommodate*. l. 18. *calme*. l. 21. *and taſte*. l. ult. XIV. p. 15. l. 16. a Truth. r. *as can be ſeen in this*. *Which*. p. 16. l. 4. f. was r. *were*. p. 17. l. 5. *Syria-Paleſtine*, l. 19. *Archives*. p. 18. l. 18. r. *never at all deny*. p. 19. l. 10. *Oral*. l. 12. *Alcoran*. p. 20. l. 21. *an holy*. p. 22. l. 9. *writings*. l. 21. f. Religion r. *Believing*. p. 25. l. 23. *apparelled*. l. 28. *makes*. p. 27. l. 6. *nothing elſe*. l. 24. *worſhip*. p. 28. l. 28. *Precepts deliver'd by the moſt excellent Philoſophers with the Precepts contained*. p. 30. l. 1. f. ſix r. *four*. l. 20. f. and r. *or*. l. 27. f. had r. *hath*. p. 31. l. 13. dele the. l. 21. *Religion*, l. 23. *Morney*. l. 25. *Savanarola*.

Brevis Demonſtratio;

Or, a brief

DEMONSTRATION

OF THE

TRUTH

OF

Chriſtian Religion.

I. FOr the demonſtration of the fundamentals of Chriſtian Religion, it is neceſſary to inquire, which is that Religion reveal'd by God, wherein the moſt perfect way of worſhipping God is contain'd? Here now all the Religions that are or ever have been in the world, are to be taken and examined by the Rule of right reaſon; and out of them all that is to be acknowledged genuine and truly divine, which preſcribes that manner of ſerving God, which is moſt perfect and moſt agreeable to the Principles of ſound Reaſon. But leaſt any ſhould think it too hard a task, to examine all the ſorts of Religions in the world, or be affrighted with the vaſt difficulty of Inquiry, among ſo many differences of Opinions concerning God

and his Worſhip, we will abridge this toil. For the ſo diverſe kinds of Religion may be reduc'd to four Heads or Ranks: For whatever Religion either was or is, is either Heatheniſh or Jewiſh, or Chriſtian or Mahometan. Now then out of all theſe we will demonſtrate, that the Chriſtian Religion is the trueſt, and that by two Arguments.

II. The firſt is taken from the higheſt perfection of this Religion, which argues moſt ſtrongly that it was not deviſed by the wit of man, but that it proceeded from God out of Heaven. For either all Religion is to be rejected, and God and his Providence wholly to be denied, (which we ſhall prove cannot be done without folly, yea madneſs) or it muſt needs be, that this Religion (which is ſo perfect in all reſpects, that nothing is wanting to it, which is required to the beſt way of worſhipping God) is true, and divinely deliver'd and reveal'd. For whether you conſider it comparitively or abſolutely, you ſhall find it to be moſt perfect. For it not onely very far excells in perfection, all the Religions, which any where are or have been in the world, but alſo it is impoſſible, that another more perfect according to right reaſon, could be imagin'd or invented.

III. Both which that they may appear, as well its Nature as Adjuncts, or ſome of its moſt divine Effects, are briefly to be look'd into. But we ought not to judge of its nature from elſewhere, then from thoſe Books which are confeſs'd by all the Profeſſors of this Religion, although differing among themſelves, to contain Chriſtian Religion. For as a Judgement ought to to be made of the Religion of the Gentiles out of the Books of the Heathen; of the Mahometan, out of the Books of the Alcaron; of the Jewiſh Religion out of the Books of

Moſes;

Moſes; ſo it is fit to judge of Chriſtian Religion out of thoſe Books, which all Chriſtians believe and confeſs, to have been written by the firſt Authors of this Religion. Which Books ſhall thereby be prov'd to be of divine and undeniable Authority, when it is prov'd that in them is contain'd a deſcription of a moſt perfect and moſt divine Religion.

IV. The nature of Chriſtian Religion is to be conſidered either in reſpect of Parts, or in reſpect of Qualities; its parts are promiſes and precepts. What can be more ſublime and perfect, then the promiſes of Chriſtian Religion? In this life a few things truly belonging to the body, and neceſſary for ſuſtenance are promiſed, that the Chriſtian Religion might be by ſo much the more perfect: But in the mean time there is promiſed that which exceeds all earthly Goods, even the higheſt and paternal favour of God, offering pardon to them that repent of all their paſt ſins, and that they might not ſin for time to come, the gift of the Holy Spirit (a neceſſary help to the performance of the duties of Piety) and alſo a peculiar Guard of Angels. But after Death there is promiſed a return to Life, bleſſed Immortality, a heavenly Kingdome in conjunction with a moſt pleaſant Aſpect of the ſupreme Deity, and the fellowſhip of bleſſed Spirits. The Precepts alſo are ſutable to ſo ſublime Promiſes. There is nothing wanting in them to the higheſt ſanctity; foraſmuch as Chriſtian Piety conſiſts not * in bodily waſhing, but in true renovation of mind, in ſubduing of the fleſh and affections, in an unconquerable patience under evils, in a conſtant meekneſs, in a perfect abſtinence from hurting others, in a chearfull readineſs to help them, in a continual celebration of the Name of God, and ſtudious exerciſe of

fervent Prayer, in a diligent regulating of all actions, words and thoughts, in a full faith and truſt in God, in a moſt ardent deſire of celeſtial Immortality and ſerious meditation of divine things, in a true contempt of the World, its Riches, Honours and Pleaſures, and if there be any thing elſe, which Reaſon dictates to be joyned with Vertue.

V. Neither may any man ſay that the precepts of Vertue would have been more perfect, if we had been injoyned perpetual abſtinence from Marriage, as alſo from Meat and Drink, or if there had been no remiſſion of ſins, no reward propoſed to them that do well, that ſo men might be drawn by the love of Vertue alone, not hope of reward. For who ſees not that ſuch things can have no place in men, as are above their ſtrength and nature? It is therefore great imprudence to require of them ſo great perfection. In which matter the Heathen Philoſoſophers extreamly doted, who dream'd of I know not what empty Notions of Vertue, as if converſing in *Plato*'s Commonwealth, they had had a purpoſe to form the life of celeſtial Perſons, not the manners of mortal and frail men. The perfection of precepts is to be accomodated to the model of the ſtrength and nature of thoſe to whom they are preſcribed. So ſound Reaſon, ſo Prudence injoynes. For who would praiſe him, that ſhould impoſe on a Child of three years old, a Burden that can ſcarce be born by a ſtrong man of full age. In this very thing therefore the high perfection and wiſdome of Chriſtian Religion is manifeſt, that it delivers moſt divine precepts, and preſcribes a Doctrine of great piety, as greater cannot agree to mortal men; yet nevertheleſs it doth not onely not exceed humane ſtrength, but alſo is not hard to be performed, as we ſhall ſhew by and by.

VI. We

VI. We ſhall now ſpeak of the qualities of Chriſtian Religion, which appertain to the perfection of its nature, they are theſe:

1. That it is univerſal, not peculiar to one Nation only, but common to all men of all Kindreds, Nations, Ages, Conditions and Sexes.

2. That it is ſpiritual both in its precepts and promiſes, in thoſe requiring internal purity of mind, not external cleanſing of the body; and in theſe propounding not carnal but ſpiritual benefits.

3. That it is eaſie, becauſe it invites men to piety by a moſt ample and ineſtimable reward; for the greatneſs of the reward leſſens and takes away all the difficulty of the labour. Again, becauſe it many wayes aſſiſts humane imbecillity, in the courſe of vertue, by the holy Spirit, inaſmuch as thereby mens minds are confirmed in the Truth, cleared in doubts, encouraged in dangers, and filled with a ſure hope of eternal Life. Thirdly, becauſe it preſcribes nothing but what is exactly conſonant to reaſon: but thoſe things are more eaſily done, the equity whereof the Underſtanding ſees, and the reaſon of which we perceive; then thoſe things, which why they are to be done, we know not. That is the part of ingenuous men, or (as I may ſo ſay) of Sons, who are not ignorant of what the Father doth; This of Servants, who are ſeriouſly treated, and to whom is given no reaſon of deſignes, but are led by the meer Authority of the Commander. That makes that what is commanded be done willingly and cheerfully; this unwillingly and by conſtraint.

VII. Let us now come to the Adjuncts or Effects of Chriſtian Religion, and they are diſcerned in the altogether

ther divine and wonderfull propagation of it, in which theſe things following are to be noted.

1. That many thouſands of men of all ſorts, forſaking their Countrey-Religion, to which they were accuſtomed from their youth, embraced it in great numbers.

2. That very ſuddenly, that is, in the ſpace of thirty years, or thereabouts, as appears by Hiſtories, it ſpread it ſelf far and near, not onely in *Judea*, and all *Aſia*, yea through the whole *Roman* Empire, but beyond it alſo, it ſounded in the ears of *Parthians* and *Indians*.

3. That it extirpated Paganiſme, ſo that the Religion of Chriſt increaſing, that came to nothing, neither is there any memory of it now extant, ſave in Books onely.

4. That being not ſupported by Armes and worldly power it encreaſed ſo much, and for near three hundred years, before the Emperour *Conſtantine* induced it, it was promoted by the means onely of private men.

5. That by mean, contemptible, ſimple men and Idiots it was firſt delivered and divulged.

6. That all the wiſe and mighty of this world were againſt it; yet notwithſtanding, neither by the craft of the *Jewes*, nor power of the *Romane Cæſars*, (whereof ten are reckoned chief Perſecutors of this Religion) nor yet of other Heathens could it be ſuppreſſed.

7. That innumerable companies of its Profeſſors by no, though never ſo cruel pains and torments, no not by any the moſt ignominious death, ſuffered themſelves to be affrighted from it.

8. That it has nothing in it gratefull to the fleſh, it looſeth not the reins to licentiouſneſs, it opens not the way to pleaſures nor honours, it allures not men by the com-

commodities of this life, but rather deprives them of them, leaſt any ſhould think that the ſo proſperous ſucceſs of its propagation were to be aſcribed to a Doctrine, flattering and pleaſing the luſts of men.

9. That it hath continued now a thouſand ſix hundred ſixty years and upward, without any interruption.

10. That at this day it is ſo largely ſpread, that it has filled almoſt the whole world; for it poſſeſſeth not onely all *Europe*, but alſo *Macedonia*, *Thracia*, and the Iſles of the *Ægean* Sea are filled with it, and both under the *Turk* and *Tartar* live Chriſtians innumerable; in *Affrica*, alſo in the Kingdome of the *Abiſsines*, *Congo* and *Dangali*; alſo in *Peruvia* and New *Spain* in *Goa*, and the Iſlands unto which the *Dutch* and *Spaniards* have Commerce, touching which Geographers may be conſulted.

Laſtly, They are not wanting in *America*, as teſtifieth *Acoſta*, and others, that have written of the *American* Affairs. Certainly all theſe things are an Argument that God takes care of this Religion, and that by his providence it was upheld and propagated.

VIII. Theſe things being conſidered, it is eaſie to perceive that other Religions are not to be compar'd with this. For as to the *Jewiſh*, Chriſtian Religion indeed gives teſtimony to it, that it alſo had God for its Authour; but (1) its great imperfection ſhews it was given but for a time onely; for whether you conſider the promiſes, they according to the letter did contain onely temporal and worldly things, in which ſurely the chiefeſt Good could not conſiſt; and no man can deny but God might give better then they; or whether you conſider the precepts they for the moſt part were in preſcribing Ceremonies,* or whether you conſider the latitude and extent, it was reſtrained to one Nation onely, neither

did

did God take courſe that it ſhould be preached to other Nations; yea, its nature was ſuch, that it could not concern other Nations, which appears even from the ſacrifices, which ought not to be offered but in *Paleſtine*, and by the Tribe of *Levi*: whence it is, that even at this day the *Jewes* being baniſhed from their Native Countrey abſtain from ſacrificing. So neither could the Laws concerning Firſt-fruits, Tithes, and Feſtival Aſſemblies, *Exod.* 34. 26. *Deut.* 26. 23. alſo 12. 5, 6. 16. 16. be obſerved by all Nations. Either therefore other Nations ought never to worſhip God, and conſequently God had in vain given to the greateſt part of men the uſe of reaſon and will, which are the inſtruments of Religion, which to ſay is abſurd: as of neceſſity another Religion was to be delivered by God, which ſhould concern all the men in the world. For although it was ſo for a time, that the other Nations beſides the *Jewes*, were deſtitute of Divine Revelation, and that by the certain counſel of God, namely, becauſe of the voluntary defection of thoſe Nations from God to idolatry and impiety, yet it is abſurd to hold that they were ſo rejected of God for ever.

2. That it was to be abrogated, the propheſies which are extant in their prophetick Books do ſhew: among which that place in *Jeremy*, 31. 31. is eminent, where God promiſes to make a New Covenant with his people, different from that of *Moſes*. Alſo *Dan.* 9. 24. where the Coming of the *Meſsiah*, the deſolation of the City *Jeruſalem*, the deſtruction of the Temple, and the abolition of Sacrifices is foretold. It was granted to *Aaron*'s poſterity alone to offer Sacrifice, and that in the Countrey of their Fathers: but in *Pſal.* 110. there is promiſed a Prieſt, not according to the order of *Aaron*, but according to the order of *Melchiſedeck*, that is, ſuch an one

as

as ſhould have neither Predeceſſour nor Succeſſour in the Prieſthood. It is foretold in *Iſaiah* 19. 19. *Chron.* 66. 18. to the end, *Mal.* 1. 11. that the *Gentiles* alſo ſhould be worſhippers of God, and offer Sacrifices to him, and be his Prieſts. The *Jewes* in the Law were commanded to keep Feſtivals; but now *Iſa.* 1. 11. and ſo forward, God ſaith, That he diſdained as their Sacrifices, ſo alſo their appointed Times and Feaſt-dayes, and that he was weary to bear them; and *Iſa.* 66. 23. it is foretold, That if it ſhould come to paſs, that the Worſhip of God ſhould be perpetual, and not performed on certain dayes onely, but every day; to wit, from Sabbath to Sabbath, and from New Moon to New Moon.

3. That the *Jewiſh* Religion is indeed abrogated, and that thoſe propheſies are fulfilled, the thing it ſelf ſhews. For that place in which God had fixed the Seat of his publick Worſhip is taken away, and quite overthrown, together with the Temple, its Ornaments and Sacred Veſſels: ſo that the Temple could never be reſtored, although *Julian* attempted it, as *Ammianus Marcellinus* a Heathen Writer teſtifieth, *lib.* 23. *But he ſaith that he was hindered by fearfull balls of fire, which did ſpring out of the foundations, and conſumed men.* The Prieſthoods and Rites of Sacrifices inſtituted by God, belonging to Divine Worſhip, and the diſtinction of Tribes was taken away, ſo that a great part of the *Moſaical* Laws lie now neglected by the *Jews*, and can by no means be kept. The very people of the Jews ſo much heretofore beloved of God for their Anceſtours, now for more then a thouſand ſix hundred years diſperſed and baniſhed out of their Countrey, are become the laughing-ſtock, the dregs and talk of all other people & Nations, which is againſt the promiſes of the Covenant, in which earthly happineſs was propo-

ſed to the Jews, *Deut.* 28. God indeed threatneth them even with baniſhment and all kinds of adverſity, if they ſhould tranſgreſs: but to them that ſhould from their hearts repent; and return to obedience, he promiſeth that he will ſhew mercy to them, and bring them back from the utmoſt corners of the world to their Countrey again, *Deut.* 30. *Nehem.* 1. 8, 9. But *Iſa.* 54. 7, *&c.* God ſaith that he will be angry with his people but a little while, but now after ſo great an interval of time there is as yet no hope of a better condition, and return into their Countrey: from that time there has not been any Prophet among them, there is none ſent by God to comfort them, which yet was done heretofore in the *Babiloniſh* Captivity, which though it was moſt heavy, yet it laſted onely ſeventy years.

IX. Neither ought it to move any one that it was promiſed that that Old Covenant ſhould be perpetual and everlaſting. For the word *everlaſting* or *perpetual* is not alwayes taken for an infinite duration, but for a very long time, which is uſual as well in common ſpeech as in Holy Writ. So it is ſaid that the Land of *Canaan* ſhould be an *everlaſting* poſſeſſion to the ſeed of *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. 8. out of which nevertheleſs they were ejected: in like manner that the ſacrifice ſhould be perpetual, *Lev.* 6. 20. which notwithſtanding is now ceaſed among the Jews. It is ſaid *Exod.* 21. 6. that the Servant ſhould ſerve his Maſter for ever. The divine Prophet *David* ſaith, that he would praiſe God for ever, that is, all the dayes of his life, *Pſal.* 52. 9. It is ſaid that *Samuel* ſhould abide in the Temple for ever, 1 *Sam.* 1. 22. The hills alſo are ſaid to be everlaſting, *Gen.* 49. 26. The earth to abide for ever, *Eccleſ.* 1. 4. By that manner of ſpeech therefore are diſtinguiſhed the Laws that were to endure as

long

long as the Jewiſh Religion ſhould laſt, from thoſe which were conſtituted for a certain time, ſuch were ſome of thoſe that were preſcribed to the Jews in the Wilderneſs, *Exod.*35.26,27. Neither is it to be thought that God did ſo bind himſelf by thoſe words that he ſhould not change any thing, as to intimate, that he would not have any thing changed by men: For God made Laws not to himſelf, but to men. He has alwayes power of abrogating Laws that have been once made, eſpecially thoſe that are not founded in intrinſical honeſty, but ſuch as are of a middle and indifferent nature, and depend upon the meer will of the Commander, (ſuch are all Ceremonial Laws) but his Creatures cannot do ſo.

X. Hitherto we have ſhew'd out of the Moſaical and and Prophetick Books, how imperfect the Jewiſh Religion is. But you will acknowledge the ſame to be more imperfect, and confeſs it to be no wayes agreeable to reaſon, if you look into the Talmudick Books (which are ſtuffed with vain Tradition and old Wives Fables) and upon the various ſuperſtitions of the moderate Jews. You ſhall find their God weeping for ruin'd *Jeruſalem*, and reading daily in the Law, beſides other moſt abſurd things concerning *Behemoth* and *Leviathan*.

XI. If the Jewiſh Religion which had God for its Author, gives place to the Chriſtian, much more the Mahometan and Heatheniſh. The Mahometan indeed is later then the Chriſtian, and it cannot deny that Chriſt the Author of it, was a divine man. Now that the Mahometan Religion is falſe, appears chiefly from theſe reaſons:

1. Becauſe it is contrary to the Chriſtian Religion, which we have ſhew'd to be true and given by God, and

hath taken away very many of its Laws; for whatsoever is contrary to Truth is false.

2. Because instead of Christs precepts it hath substituted baser Laws; and it is far more imperfect then the Christian, as well in its promises as precepts. For it promises nothing but carnal things, and hath recalled Circumcision, which together with other Ceremonies had been abrogated by Christ. But it is no wayes credible, that God after so perfect a Religion as the Christian is, would propose to the World a more imperfect one, seeing it doth not become the most wise God to descend from high to low things, but rather go on from imperfection to perfection.

3. Because it has been established and propagated by Armes and carnal force, and is even still preserved by the same.

4. Because in matters of Faith it forbids inquiry after Truth, and takes away all, yea a modest liberty of disputing, and also keeps the people from reading the Books which it accounts sacred, whereby it makes it self forthwith suspected, as if it were not good wares, which is forbid to be view'd and searched.

5. Because *Mahomet* the Author of it was a most profane man; for he was a long time a Ravisher, and alwayes given to Women: Hence it is that in his *Alcaron*, many obscene and foul things are read. But that God by an unclean man would institute any holy Religion, is by no means agreeable to reason.

XII. The Heathen Religion remains, which truly doth not deserve to be brought into comparison with the Christian, so manifest is its falsity and turpitude even from these reasons:

1. Because it had no promises nor precepts from God:

God: of which two things true Religion doth conſiſt.

2. Becauſe it believed not one moſt High God, but divided the Government of the World amongſt many gods, not ſubordinate one to another.

3. Becauſe it affirmed concerning its gods, things moſt filthy and abhorrent from all honeſty, deſcribing their Luſts, Quarrels, Thefts, and I know not what wickedneſſes.

4. Becauſe it was not aſhamed to worſhip things inanimate, and Brutes far inferiour in dignity to men.

5. Becauſe it was burthened with Rites that were partly ridiculous and fooliſh, partly obſcene and impure, partly horrid and cruel: All which things every one doth eaſily perceive are contrary to ſound reaſon. But in Chriſtian Religion you ſhall find no ſuch thing, which alſo by its coming in wholly blotted out and entinguiſhed that Heatheniſh Religion, as we have before hinted. If any one would ſhew us beſide this old one, ſome other Paganiſh Religion in the World at this day, its falſity alſo would forthwith appear, if it were compared with the Chriſtian. For *rectum eſt index ſui & obliqui, Truth ſhews both it ſelf and falſhood.*

XIII. Thus we have demonſtrated that Chriſtian Religion conſidered both abſolutely and in it ſelf, and alſo compared with all other Religions is moſt perfect. Now if you demand how it came to paſs, that God did not preſently in the firſt Ages of the World inſtitute it among men, there are more then one reaſon at hand.

1. Becauſe men were at the beginning not capable of ſo great perfection. For mankind had after a ſort its Infancy, Childhood, and Youth, which needed as it were the firſt Elements of Religion, that ſo it might by little and little be prepar'd for higher things, and brought to per-

perfection. Neither in Arts did men forthwith come, or were as it were at one leap brought to the higheſt perfection; but humane induſtry did from rude beginnings, as it were by ſteps, aſcend and aſpire to it. It became therefore a prudent Law-giver to accomodate himſelf to the capacity of thoſe that were to be inſtructed, and not ſo much to conſider his own wiſdome, as the dulneſs of thoſe that were to be taught. So are Parents and Maſters wont to proceed prudently in the inſtructing of their Children and Scholars. Therefore it became alſo the moſt wiſe God in delivering precepts of Religion, to proceed by little and little from the more imperfect ones to thoſe that were more perfect.

2. Becauſe by this deferring of the perfect Religion unto more adult times, God would excite in the minds of men a greater alacrity to entertain it. For long faſting is the beſt Sauce for meat moſt ſweet in it ſelf, and after long Storms and Tempeſts the ſmiling Calms is more grateſull. God would therefore that men ſhould firſt be throughly ſenſible of their moſt miſerable condition without hope of immortality, taſte all the evils of mortality, that afterward when the promiſe of eternal felicity had ſhined forth from Heaven, all men every where might by ſo much the more eagerly flie together to ſo joyfull a meſſage, and ſhould embrace it with both their Arms. Neither indeed do Mortals now behave themſelves becoming enough ſo great a good: What think you would have been done, if preſently from the beginning of the World the way to Heaven had lain open to mankind; and ſo men might think that the right of the heavenly Inheritance was as it were a thing natural to them, and offer'd as their due?

The Truth of the Chriſtian Religion being demonſtrated

ted from its great perfection, we ſhall now bring another Argument which even alone would be ſufficient to prove the matter in hand: yea, which moſt evidently demonſtrates not onely the Truth of Chriſtian Religion, but alſo both the Exiſtence and Providence of God againſt impious Atheiſts. So that all that hath hitherto been ſpoken, may hence take very much ſtrength and weight. And it is drawn from Hiſtory and Chronology; for either no Hiſtory is true, and credit is to be denied to all things done, whether written or ſpoken, and the ſame are to be accounted meer Fables and Fictions; or if this be abſurd, all muſt confeſs, that that which is delivered in Hiſtorical Monuments touching Chriſtian Religion revealed by God is true; for there can be no Hiſtory ſhewn, in which are to be found, I will not ſay more, but as many Arguments, Teſtimonies, and Marks of Truth, which that it may appear, there are two things in all to be proved by us.

1. That ſometimes there was in the world ſuch an one as Chriſt Jeſus, who is ſaid to be the Authour of this Religion.

2. That this Jeſus was a Divine Perſon, and the true Meſſiah or Saviour of the world, ſent by God to inſtitute this Religion. When both theſe are proved, there will remain no doubt, not onely of Chriſtian Religion, that it is moſt true and to be received by all, but alſo of God, that he is, and that he takes care of Mankind.

XV. The former can be proved without much ado, yea, it ſcaree needs proof. For who can doubt that Chriſt was upon the earth, when he ſeeth the Religion, which has its name from him, to be extant even at this very day? for this is all one as if one ſhould doubt whether *Mahomet* the Author of the *Mahometan* Religion, which he knows to be extant, was ever in being? or

when

when he hears *Ariſtotle's* Doctrine taught in the Schools, whether *Ariſtotle* ever was? or when he reads the Hiſtories of what was done by the *Romans*, *Greeks*, and *Macedonians* ſhould doubt whether there ever was either thoſe Nations, or the Writers of thoſe things? But if any be either ſo ſtupid or ignorant of thoſe things that are done in the world, he ſhall be convinced by the Teſtimony of the whole world. For,

1. Thouſands of Chriſtians are witneſſes, which we have ſhewed above, to have filled almoſt all the corners of the Earth.

2. The very bittereſt enemies of Chriſtian Religion are witneſſes. For both the *Mahometans* and all the Jews do teſtifie it, among thoſe in the *Alcoran*, among theſe in the *Thalmudick* Books many things are read concerning Chriſt. Laſtly, the moſt famous Writers of the Heathens have made mention of him, among others *Tacitus*, *Suetonius*, *Pliny junior*, *Alias Pampridius*, *Alias Spartianus*, *Flavius Vopiſcus*, *Eutropius*, *Ammianus Marcellinus*; the words of ſome of whom ſhall be produced afterward. From the ſame doth appear both the place and time, when and where he lived, by whom he was put to death, to wit, in the Reign of *Tiberius*, and by the Governour *Pontius Pilate*, alſo that he roſe up in *Judea*: for *Tacitus* calls *Judea the ſource of this evil*, meaning Chriſtian Religion; ſome of the ancient Chriſtians in their time, that is, well nigh two Ages after the Birth of Chriſt, teſtifie, That the Acts of *Pilate* were extant, and kept in the *Roman* Archives, in which all things done in *Judea* by and with Chriſt, were written to *Tiberius* the Emperour, & the *Romane* Senate by *Pilate*, then Preſident there. And that theſe do not teſtifie this falſly, appears from hence, That writing Apologies for the Chriſtiſtians to the *Roman Cæſars*,

ſars, they ſo confidently appealed to thoſe Acts and publick Records. Theſe are the words of *Tertullian* in his Apologetick: Tiberius *therefore, in whoſe time the Chriſtian Name came into the world, after he underſtood out of* Syria, Paleſtine, *that which there had manifeſted the Truth of his* (Chriſt) *Divinity, propoſed it to the Senate with the Prerogative of his Suffrage; the Senate, becauſe they did not approve, rejected it;* Cæſar *perſiſted in his opinion, threatning danger to the Accuſers of Chriſtians. Conſult your Commentaries, there ye ſhall find, that* Nero *did firſt rage with the Imperial ſword againſt this Sect, then chiefly ſpringing up at* Rome. It is moſt remarkable, that in the ſame Apologetick he cites out of the ſame Acts of *Pilate*, a Teſtimony concerning the darkneſs that miraculouſly happened about the Paſſion of Chriſt at Mid-day. *In the ſame moment* (ſaith he) *the Day was darkned, even when the Sun was at the higheſt: verily they alſo that knew not it had relation to Chriſt, thought it was an Eclipſe: and yet ye have this diſaſter of the world recorded in your Archives,* *Juſtin Martyr* alſo in his Apology to *Antoninus Pius* writeth in theſe words; *That theſe things were ſo done, ye may know out of the Acts that were written under* Pilate. And again, *And who hath done theſe things ye may know out of thoſe Records that were written under* Pilate. With what face I pray could they ſo groſly lye before the Emperors? How eaſily might they be detected and convicted of falſhood? How dear would this lye have coſt them, if either there were no ſuch Acts, or that thoſe things they affirmed of Chriſt were not extant in them? The ſame Authors, that they might ſhew that Chriſt was born in the time of the general Tax under *Auguſtus*, as it is ſet down in the Goſpel according to *Luke*, appealed to the Tax-rolls, and referred the Gentiles to them, in which

the deſcription of that Tax was as yet in that time extant, and there was read the Name of Jeſus born of *Mary* in *Bethlehem*. For thus ſaith *Tertullian lib. 6.* againſt *Marcion*. *Laſtly, concerning the Tax* [or Enrolling] *of* Auguſtus, *which the* Roman *Archives keep as a moſt faithfull witneſs of our Lords Nativity*: And afterward. *But it is alſo manifeſt that the Tax* [or Enrolling] *under* Auguſtus, *was made at this time in* Judea *by* Sentius Saturninus, *in which they might find out his Parentage*. And in the Book againſt the Jews: *For he was of the Countrey of* Bethlehem, *and of the Houſe of* David, *as by the* Romans, Mary, *of whom is born Chriſt, was reckoned in the Tax-roll. Chryſoſtome* later then *Tertullian* affirms, That as yet in his time thoſe Rolls and the Name of Jeſus in them were extant. There were alſo many of the Heathens who wrote againſt Chriſtian Religion, ſuch were *Celſus, Porphyrius, Julian*: but they, by reaſon of the clear evidence of the thing, did never deny but that there was ſuch an one as Chriſt. But in a matter moſt evident, what needs much proof, eſpecially ſeeing that from the later particular which we have undertaken to prove, the former alſo will be manifeſt, and neceſſarily follow? therefore omitting this, we will now proceed with Gods aſſiſtance to the proof of that.

XVI. As to the later then, namely, that Jeſus was a Divine Perſon, and ſent from God, that will without doubt be ſufficiently proved, when we ſhall have proved that this Jeſus was famous for ſtupendious miracles, led a moſt holy life, and underwent moſt direfull torments, and an ignominious death upon the Croſs for the cauſe of his Religion; and afterward the third day was raiſed by God from the dead, and taken up into Heaven, and from thence he ſhed forth upon the Diſciples plentifully of the

the holy Spirit, and ſent them to teach all Nations his Doctrine.

XVII. Now this is proved by three reaſons. The firſt is, That there are undoubted witneſſes of this matter, and ſuch whoſe Teſtimony cannot but be true; but thoſe witneſſes are,

1. As to his death and miracles, the very mortal enemies of Chriſtian Religion, whoſe Teſtimony ſurely in this caſe is free from all ſuſpicion of fraud. And they are firſt the Jews, from whoſe both or all Confeſſion and Talmudick Writings every one may know it; Secondly, The Mahometans in the Alcaron; Thirdly, the Heathens, of whom are *Celſus* and *Julian*, who although they detracted much from Chriſt in the Writings which they ſet out againſt Chriſtians, yet they did not deny his cruel death and miracles; which appears from their reſutation by *Origen* and *Cyril*.

2. The witneſſes of all thoſe things, which we have related concerning Chriſt, were his Diſciples, who lived in that Age, and eſpecially his twelve Apoſtles, to whom was added alſo a thirteenth, who of a moſt fierce enemy became a Diſciple of Chriſt, being called from Heaven to give witneſs to him. Neither matters it, that his Diſciples onely bear witneſs of his Reſurrection and Exaltation; for ſuch things as theſe no one but his Diſciples could witneſs. For who could ſee Chriſt raiſed again, and reigning in Heaven, and not become his Diſciple? It ſufficeth that the Teſtimony of thoſe Diſciples is beyond all exception.

XVIII. But that their Teſtimony was ſuch is proved,

1. Becauſe they confirmed their Teſtimony by moſt Divine Miracles, in healing Diſeaſes incurable by humane

mane Art, in raiſing the Dead, and caſting out Devils; but that they did theſe things will by and by appear.

2. Becauſe it is certain that thoſe witneſſes could neither be deceived, nor would deceive. That they could not be deceived is manifeſt, 1. Becauſe they were not onely Ear but Eye-witneſſes. 2. Becauſe they witneſſed a thing, not once onely ſeen, but approved by frequent and often repeated Experiments for forty dayes together, and not looked upon with the eyes onely, but handled alſo with the hands. 3. Becauſe there was not onely one witneſs, but beſides five hundred together, that at one and the ſame time ſaw Chriſt after he was riſen, and unto whom *Paul* appealeth, 1 *Cor.* 15. 6. (which lyars are not wont to do) there were thirteen chief witneſſes in a ſpecial manner choſen and appointed to teſtifie this very thing. So many perſons could not poſſibly be deceived in things expoſed to their ſenſes. It remains to be proved that they would not deceive, which is hence manifeſt:

1. Becauſe they were honeſt men, and of holy and unblameable life: ſo that they were never accuſed, much leſs convicted of any real crime, no not by their moſt malicious enemies, among whom they converſed.

2. Becauſe this Profeſſion coſt them the greateſt ſufferings and perils, neither did they gain by this way either riches, or honour, or glory; but on the contrary incurred the bittereſt hatred of the whole world, and drew upon themſelves an Heap and Pile of moſt grievous Afflictions, which by a bare deniall of this thing, they might have avoided. Well ſaith *Ovid*;

---- *Cum*

---- Cum ſint præmia falſi
Nulla, ratam debet teſtis habere fidem:

When falſhood reward has none,
That witneſs is a faithfull one.

How much more ought the credit of that witneſs to be held Authentick, when the Teſtimony has not onely no reward, but moreover draws along with it perils, ſcourgings, baniſhments, contumelies, impriſonments, and all manner of moſt terrible deaths? If they had been ſuch perverſe men, as that they would lye on ſet purpoſe, certainly they would not have feigned with ſo great damage to themſelves a thing ſo odious and hatefull, and would rather curry favour with the Nobles and People of the Jews, whom they knew to hate Chriſt with a perfect hatred, then by a falſe and ſo odious an affirmation, to have provoked and ſtirred up their minds againſt them: for this is the manner of Impoſtors, and thoſe that love lying, to contrive nothing ſooner then that which they think will be moſt gratefull to their Hearers: and as Fiſhers are wont to bait their hooks with ſuch things as they know the fiſhes like; ſo theſe alſo, that they may inſinuate into the minds of men, love to tell thoſe things which they know will pleaſe them, and accommodate their words to tickle their ears. But theſe deſpiſing pleaſures, and contemning both the hatred and kindneſs of men, underwent both an infamous life and death for the profeſſion of this thing; what place is here for ſuſpicion of any the leaſt untruth. Neither may you think that this Argument is infringed by the example of thoſe, who even for the ſake of a falſe Religion and Doctrine,

ctrine, bear oftentimes cruel torments, yea and ſtick not to ſpend their lives on it: For it is one thing to die for a falſe Doctrine, which thou believeſt to be true; another thing to die for a falſe Doctrine, which thou knoweſt to be falſe, and feigned by thy ſelf: Of the firſt there are very many examples, but of the later it is impoſſible that among men in their wits, and not extreamly mad, there ſhould be any example at all. But the moſt divine Writing of the Apoſtles, and full of profond Wiſdome, which we have in our hands, do more then enough vindicate them from the imputation of fooliſhneſs and madneſs.

XIX. A ſecond reaſon, whereby the reſurrection of Chriſt and his Divinity is proved, is this; namely, That ſo many thouſands of men in all Nations believed on him; not onely of the common ſort, but alſo of the Learned, Wiſe men, and Philoſophers. And they ſo believed, that they ſuffered not themſelves to be deterr'd from this Faith by any Perſecutions, yea, or cruel Death. And this is ſo much the more wonderfull, in that the obſtacles to Religion were almoſt infinite. They were hindred, (1) By an inveterate love of the Religions of their Countrey, received by long Cuſtome. Who knows not how zealous the Jews are, and were alwayes in their Religion? and no man can doubt the ſame of the Heathens, that knows that *Socrates* was therefore condemn'd at *Athens*, becauſe he ſeem'd to introduce a new Religion.

2. By the ignominious Death of Chriſt; for how hard think you was it, to believe in one that was crucified, and to take him for Maſter and Lord, whom the Jews hang'd upon a Croſs as a wicked and heinous Offender, tortured with all kinds of contumely and cruelty?

Hence

Hence *Paul* the Apoſtle not without cauſe writeth, 1 *Cor.* 1.23. that he preached Chriſt crucified, to the Jews a ſtumbling-block, and to the Greeks fooliſhneſs.

3. By the harſhneſs of the precepts; for the Doctrine of Chriſt bade open war to all carnal Concupiſcences, and confined men to a ſtrait path.

4. They were hindred by the incredibility of the things promiſed: *We declare unto you* (ſaith the Apoſtle) 1 *Cor.* 2.9. *things that eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have come into the mind of man, which God hath prepared for them that love him.* But we do not eaſily believe things that we ſee not; as one ſaid, Our hands are eyed, they believe nothing but what they ſee. Great happineſs indeed is promiſed, but not till after death. In the mean time viſible things that are preſent are to be forgone, for the hope of inviſible that are future.

5. By the means of the perſons, by whom the Doctrine of Chriſt was preached: For they were of the common ſort of men, Unlearned, Fiſhers, Publicans. Moreover few, ſuch as neither ſplendour of birth had made illuſtrious, nor fortune conſpicuous, nor multitude formidable, nor power venerable, nor wit admirable, nor favour of Nobles acceptable, nor any Art or Eloquence made fit to bend and allure the minds of Mortals. And nevertheleſs Synagogues, Schools, Academies, Cities, Towns, Kingdomes, and Empires, yielded to, and believed theſe ſimple men. What *Ariſtotle*? what *Plato*? what *Chryſippus*, or *Epicurus* has got ſo many Diſciples, and perſwaded ſo many men of their Doctrine? although they were moſt famous for wit and learning: How many thouſands of thouſands have the Apoſtles, thoſe ſimple and unlearned Fiſhers, drawn unto Chriſt! So

that

that it was truly foretold them by Christ, that they should become Fishers of men.

6. By the simple and blunt way of teaching. The Apostles used not artificial and elaborate speech, neither affected and composed to deceive, but vulgar and common. *Our preaching* (saith *Paul*, 1 *Cor*.2.4.) *was not with perswasive words of mans wisdome, but in demonstration of the Spirt, and of power*. They used not force to compel Dissenters, not fraud to deceive the unwary, not carnal threats to terrifie the obstinate. They used onely perswasion, and that simple and inartificial. But who would believe, that the armed World could by perswasion alone, be subdued by unarmed weak men, indued with no Authority or priviledge?

7. By the most grievous sufferings, that were to be born or expected daily by all & singular the Professors of Christ. There was never any sort of men, no Sect, that was vexed with so many and so great Calamities, as of the Christian Religion. All the Powers, Malice, Wits of all degrees, Emperours, Kings, and People, had conspired for their destruction. Divers kinds of cruelty, most exquisite manners of death were invented. The innocent Christians were not onely despoiled of all their Goods, not onely banished, and exposed to the hatred, injuries, and contumelies of all men, but were condemned to wild Beasts, to Mines, and Quarries. Some were Ston'd, some were cast into Rivers; one was Sawn asunder, another was Flea'd alive, another was Roasted in the fire, the whole Assembly sometimes with their Meeting-house was burnt together to ashes. Witnesses of these things are the ancient Histories written, not onely by Christian, but even by Heathen Authors. *Tacitus* thus describes *Nero*'s cruelty against the Christi-

ans,

ans, *Annals* 15. 'Therefore to extinguish the rumour '(to wit of firing the City by the command of *Nero*) '*Nero* falsly accused and punished most grievously certain 'people, hated for their wickedness, which the com-'mon sort called Christians. The Author of that Name 'was Christ, who in *Tyberius* his Reign, was put to 'death under *Pontius Pilate*, Procurator of *Judea*. And 'their dangerous superstition suppressed for the time, 'burst forth again; not onely through *Judea*, where it 'first began, but in the City also, whither all wicked 'and shamefull things run from all parts, and are solem-'nized and esteemed. First they were apprehended 'which confessed that Religion; then by their detection, 'an infinite multitude were convicted, not so much for 'setting the Town on fire, as for the hate of all men 'against them. Such as were condemned, were scorned, 'and mocked, and covered in wild Beasts skins, and torn 'in pieces with Dogs, or fastned on the Cross, or burnt 'in fire; and when the day failed, they were burnt in 'the night to give light. *Nero* had made the prospect of 'his Gardens fit for that spectacle, and caused Shews to 'to be set forth in the Cirque, and himself either ap-'paralled like a Waggoner, shuffled among the people, 'or ran the race with them. Whereupon pity was taken 'on those persons, though guilty and deserving exem-'plary punishment, seeing they suffered not for any pub-'lick good, but to satisfie one mans cruelty onely. *Suetonius* also in the life of *Nero* make mention of the sufferings which the Christians endured, when he saith, *The Christians, a sort of people addicted to a new and mis-chievous superstition, were punished.* So doth this Heathen judge of Christian Religion, therefore because it was joyned with contumely of the Heathen gods and their

worſhip. But that I may not here relate all the Teſtimonies of the Heathens touching Chriſtians, one moſt clear Teſtimony of *Pliny junior* ſhall ſerve inſtead of all. He in *Epiſt. 97. ad Trajan. lib.* 10. of Epiſtles, conſulting *Trajan* what was to be done with Chriſtians, and how they were to be puniſhed, expreſſeth (1) The torments they ſuffered, and the Chriſtians conſtancy. *In the mean time with thoſe that were convented before me, as being Chriſtians I followed this method. I asked them if they were Chriſtians: thoſe that confeſſed I asked again and again, threatning puniſhment. I commanded thoſe that were conſtant to be had away. For I doubted not whatſoever it was they confeſſed, but that pertinacy and inflexible obſtinacy ought to be puniſhed.* As if indeed perſeverance in a good cauſe were pertinacy. By and by he writeth that ſome of them were *Roman Citizens*; & afterward, *by proceſs of time, as it uſeth to be, the crime diffuſed it ſelf.* So Chriſtian Religion increaſed by the very ſufferings, and took growth and ſtrength from the very perſecutions. Furthermore relating how he had brought ſome to this, that while he led them an example they would call on the gods, and ſupplicate with Wine and Frankincenſe the Images of *Cæſar* and of the Deities, beſides would curſe Chriſt; he adds, *Thoſe that are indeed Chriſtians, are ſaid to be ſuch as cannot be compelled to any ſuch thing.* Behold a high commendation of true Chriſtians! Secondly, he ſets out the Religion and Worſhip of Chriſtians: 'But they affirmed that the ſum either of their 'fault or errour was this, That they were wont to meet 'together on a certain day before day-light, to ſing 'among themſelves by turns a Song to Chriſt, as to a 'God; and to bind themſelves in covenant, not to any 'wickedneſs, but that they would not commit any theft,

'nor

' nor robberies, nor adulteries, that they would not betray ' their Truſt, nor being required deny that which was in-' truſted, which being finiſhed it was their manner to depart ' & come together again to take meat, but promiſcuous & ' harmleſs. At length he ſaith, That having uſed torments to ſearch out the Truth, *He found nothing but a wicked & exceſsive ſuperſtition.* But how wicked it was appears from his own relation. Thirdly, he tells how great a multitude of Chriſtians there was: ' For it ſeems to me a matter wor-' thy conſultation, eſpecially becauſe of the number of ' the endangered: for many of every Age, of every De-' gree of both Sexes are and will be brought into danger. ' For the contagion of this Superſtition is diffuſed, not ' onely through Cities, but alſo Towns and Countreys, ' which it ſeems poſſible to ſtop and amend. Surely it is ' manifeſt enough, that the Temples which were now al-' moſt deſolate begin to be frequented, and the ſolemn ' worſhip that was long intermitted to be repeated, and ' the Sacrifices are every where ſold, for which lately ' there was rarely found any buyers. Hence it appears from whence ſo great a hatred of Heathens againſt Chriſtians ſprang, to wit, becauſe they ſaw that utter deſtruction and ruine was ſeizing on their Idols and Paganiſh Worſhips by means of Chriſtian Religion. But *Pliny* was greatly fruſtrated in this, that he hoped that Chriſtian Religion could be ſtopped and extinguiſhed by thoſe puniſhments. For how vain all endeavours of Tyrants and Enemies were in ſuppreſſing the Goſpel, and hindring its courſe, experience it ſelf is witneſs.

XX. Seeing therefore the Chriſtians endured ſo many and ſo great things, ſeeing they had ſo many obſtacles, and yet firmly adhered to Chriſt: what other cauſe could there be thereof then the great and invincible pow-

er of Truth, which the Apoſtles confirmed both by the example of their unblameable piety and cruel death, and chiefly by miracles never before heard or ſeen. But if any one ſhall obſtinately deny that miracles accompanied the Church of Chriſt in its beginning, he conſiders not that he aſſerts a far greater miracle then ever was, to wit, that ſo great a multitude of men, and almoſt the whole world ſhould be converted without miracles. But there is no doubt but theſe Primitive Chriſtians were diligent and induſtrious enough in examining thoſe miracles, and ſearching out the Truth of Chriſtian Religion; ſeeing therein not onely their eternal ſalvation, but alſo their preſent life and all their fortunes were concerned. Very wittily and truly ſaith *Pliny*, *Singuli decipere & decipi poſſunt, nemo omnes, neminem omnes fefellerunt*; Every one may deceive, and be deceived; no man hath deceived all men, nor have all men deceived any. This Argument therefore is of ſo great moment, that no man in his wits can gain-ſay it.

XXI. The third way of proving the Divinity of Chriſt is taken hence, That the Hiſtory of the Reſurrection and Glorification of Chriſt is contained in the ſacred Books of the New Teſtament. But that thoſe Books are of Divine Authority is proved,

1. Becauſe they contain the moſt perfect way of worſhipping God, and living piouſly: ſuch as neither men nor Devil could deviſe; not men, as it appears from comparing the Precepts contained in this Book; not the Devil, becauſe he being an enemy of all vertue, cannot be the Author of ſo holy a Doctrine.

2. Becauſe there are extant in them many Predictions concerning things future, which we ſee afterward really fulfilled and proved true by the event. 1. Concerning the de-

deſtruction of the City *Jeruſalem*, and the ſubverſion of the Temple, *Mat.* 24. *Luke* 19. 43, 44. 2. Concerning the Converſion of the Gentiles to Chriſt, *Mat.* 21. 23, *&c.* *Mat.* 8. 11. 3. Concerning the great and ſudden propagation of Chriſtian Religion, *Mat.* 13. 31, 32, 33. *John* 12. 32. 4. Concerning its perpetual Duration, *Luke* 1. 33. *Mat.* 28. 20. *John* 14. 16. 5. Concerning the moſt grievous perſecutions of Chriſtians, *Mat.* 10. 17, 21, 34. That I ſay nothing now of the Prediction of Chriſt concerning his own ſufferings and Death, as alſo his Reſurrection after three dayes, *Mat.* 16. 21. *Luke* 18. 31, 32, 33. which unleſs the event had confirmed, his Diſciples would at no hand have believed in him. For by this ſo evidently falſe Prediction, he had betrayed himſelf to be an Impoſtor and Lyar.

3. Becauſe they were written by the Apoſtles, or by the familiar Companions of the Apoſtles, whom we have ſhewed a little before to have been Divine Men, and ſuch as neither could nor would lye.

XXII. This one thing therefore remains now to be proved, to wit, that the Books of the New Covenant were written by the Apoſtles, and thoſe whoſe Names they bear. But to prove that, we need no other Argument then the Teſtimony and conſent of the ancient Chriſtians, which were nearer the times of the Apoſtles. All theſe whoſe writings we have, acknowledge theſe Books for the genuine writings of the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts. And it is certain they uſed the utmoſt diligence in ſearching out the Truth of this matter. See the Epiſtles of *Ignatius*, who flouriſhed ſoon after the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*. See *Juſtin Martyr*, who lived about the hundred and fiftieth year of Chriſt. *Irenæus* about the two hundred and thirty. *Clemens Alexandrinus* about the year two hun-

hundred and ſix. *Tertullian* about the year two hundred and eight, who alſo mentions, That even the authentick writings of the Apoſtles were yet extant in ſome Churches in his time, *lib. de Præſcrip. cont. Hæret.* See *Origen* about the year two hundred and thirty. *Euſebius* the Eccleſiaſtick Hiſtorian about the year three hundred, who from the beſt Antiquities extracted eſpecially the Truth of theſe Books, differencing the genuine Apoſtolick writings from the ſpurious and counterfeit; and again, of the true and Canonical Books ſhewing which without any Controverſie were alwayes in all Churches accounted for genuine; and of which there was in the beginning ſome doubt, but ſo, as afterward the matter being better tried the doubt ceaſed. Adde to this the great multitude of Eccleſiaſtical Doctors after the time of *Conſtantine* the Great, and among them chiefly *Jerome*, an exact Searcher of this matter. But neither have the Jews in times paſt, nor Pagans ever raiſed a Controverſie with the Chriſtians touching theſe Books, as to ſay they were feigned by the Chriſtians, and falſly attributed to the Apoſtles: nay farther, *Cyril* teſtifies in the tenth Book he wrote againſt *Julian*, That that Heathen Emperour and Apoſtate, a moſt bitter Perſecutor of Chriſtians, doth openly confeſs it, That the writings of *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, *Peter*, *Paul* are the ſame that Chriſtians read under thoſe names. We ſee then that this ſo unanimous and uniform conſent concerning theſe Books, had continued without interruption to this day, that is, for more then ſixteen hundred years. Behold, into how various Sects Chriſtians have for a long time been, and are now divided: how diſperſed and different in Regions, Tongues, Wits, Opinions, and notwithſtanding their ſo much diſagreeing in many chief Points of Doctrine, they all agree in this, That they con-

conſtantly and unanimouſly believe theſe writings to be Apoſtolical, and of divine Authority, why we ſhould depart from ſo ancient and perpetual a conſent, there is no reaſon. But without reaſon to doubt of or contradict a thing univerſally received is fooliſh. By what other reaſon I pray doth it appear at this day, that the works of *Livie*, *Tacitus*, *Curtius*, *Virgil*, are thoſe which are aſcribed to them, but by the conſent of all the Learned, of which there is no cauſe to doubt; and if any one doubt he may deſervedly be counted a fool. Neither yet was it ever enquired into the Books of thoſe Authors with ſo great induſtry, as into the Truth of the New Teſtament, becauſe that in the Books of the profane Authors men are little concerned; but in this Book they believe their eternal felicity is placed. Wherefore alſo it is to be reckoned, that we have ſufficiently proved the Authority of the Sacred Scriptures, ſince we have proved they cannot be doubted of without folly.

If any deſire more concerning this Subject, let him read *S. de Authoritate S. Scripturæ*, *Hugo Grotius*, of the Truth of Chriſtian Religion. *Epiſcopius Inſtitut. Theolog. de Meſsia*, *& de libris Novi Teſtamenti*. But he that is not ſatisfied with theſe, let him read *Philip More* of the Truth of Chriſtian Religion, *Raimundus Sebundus*, *Ludovicus Vives*, *Savænarola*, and many others, who have more then ſufficiently poliſhed this Subject, as well with Philoſophical ſubtilty, as great Learning and Eloquence.

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